

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ACCRA 03955 261034Z

ACTION AF-10

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, PINS, GH

SUBJ: KUMASI PIONEER CRITICIZES CLOSURE OF UNIVERSITIES AND
UNION GOVERNMENT

1. MAY 18 EDITION OF PIONEER, JUST RECEIVED HERE, CARRIES ARTICLE ON "DEMONSTRATIONS AND UNION GOVERNMENT" BY GHANA BAR ASSOCIATION NATIONAL SECRETARY KWABENA ADDAI MENSAH. ARTICLE MAKES POINT THAT "THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE IN THINKING THAT THE RECENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE COUNTRY WERE MOTIVATED BY OUTSIDE INFLUENCES OR BY DISGRUNTLED POLITICIANS." MENSAH INSTEAD DEPICTS STUDENTS AS "GHANAIS ... INCREASINGLY AWARE THAT THE PEOPLE ARE HUNGRY ... THAT QUEUING HAS BECOME THE ORDER OF THE DAY ... AND THAT SOME OF OUR MILITARY MEN ARE USING THEIR POSITIONS TO ENRICH THEMSELVES WHILE THE ORDINARY GHANAIAN KEEPS ON TIGHTENING HIS BELT. MENSAH CONCLUDES BY PUTTING FORWARD ELEVEN "POSITIVE PROPOSALS", SUGGESTING GOVERNMENT SHOULD REOPEN UNIVERSITIES, ARREST THE ECONOMIC DECLINE, SET UP A CIVILIAN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO RETURN COUNTRY TO CIVILIAN RULE BY 1978, PUT ARMED FORCES TO WORK GROWING FOOD, AND HALT AGITATION FOR UNION GOVERNMENT.

2. COMMENT: IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE APPEARANCE OF THIS ISSUE, THE PIONEER WAS CLOSED DOWN BY GOG ORDER. THIS PAPER, WHILE IT HAS KEPT THE TONE OF ITS EDITORIALS RELATIVELY BLAND, HAS BEEN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ONLY PAPER TO CONTINUE CARRYING FEATURE ARTICLES AND BYLINERS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF UNION GOVERNMENT AND OTHER MAJOR GOG POLITICES. IT HAS GIVEN A GREAT DEAL OF SPACE TO VIEWS OF THE BAR ASSOCIATION, WHICH IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE MAJOR REASONS WHY GOG DECIDED TO SHUT PAPER DOWN, LEAVING THE DOCILE TIMES AND GRAPHIC AS ONLY REMAINING DAILIES. UNLIKE PIONEER, WHICH IS PRIVATELY OWNED, TIMES AND GRAPHIC ARE CONTROLLED BY GOG AND CAN BE RELIED UPON

TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT ACTIONS. WITH CLOSURE OF PIONEER IT WILL
BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW BAR ASSOCIATION (WHOSE ACTIVISTS ARE
CENTERED IN KUMASI) WILL PUBLICIZE ITS VIEWS AND WHETHER TIMES
AND GRAPHIC WILL CARRY SUCH STORIES. SMITH

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Message Attributes

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